3: Latta Y-5 (1923-1948)1949 NS29 Yokuts NS29

184 territory in which they lived. On the basis of their differences, they are readily classified into three types of cultures.

101 Probably the most numerous and important of these cul-
619 tures was one which we will call the River Culture. Typical of
184 this culture were the *Nutunutu* of Kings River near Laton, the *Telumne* of Mill Creek where Visalia now stands, the *Kaweah* of the Venice or Kaweah Hills district north of Exeter, and the *Yowlumne* of Kern River. These people were probably more abundantly supplied with fish, game and plant food than were any of the others. They lived among beautiful surroundings and were noted for the beautiful designs and wonderful workmanship of their basketry. These river people were at home beside these broad quiet streams beneath the oak trees which towered often one hundred and fifty feet in the air, and among whose branches the woodpecker, blue jay, wood duck, magpie and dozens of other birds were constantly clamoring. They lived in permanent houses and wandered about but little. During the acorn season a few of them might go to the mountains for several weeks. From time to time they might take part with some of the tribes to the south in surrounding antelope, or driving jack rabbits, but they were not a migratory people. Prob-
[484] ably seventy-five per cent of their number lived to a ripe old age without ever having been as much as fifteen miles from the place where they were born.

101 These river tribes were the most affluent of the three cul-
181 tures. Historical data preserved would indicate that they were
184 probably more intelligent than the other tribes as well as more
619 friendly and dependable. Although practically all of the Yokuts were noted for their friendly, open disposition, the river tribes were probably more playful, jolly, hospitable and happy-
[146] go-lucky than were any of the others. Living in one place among plenty, they were also more likely to become burdened with flesh than were the other tribes.

101 The following extract from the 1845 *Report to Congress* by
175 J. C. Frémont is of interest. It describes members of the
619 Nutunutu subtribe of Yokuts on lower Kings River in 1845. They were a typical river people:

"On the opposite side we found forty or fifty Indians, who had come to meet us from the village below. We made them some small presents, and invited them to accompany us to our encampment which, after about three miles through fine oak groves, we made on the river.

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Acorn soup was dipped from the basket with the first three fingers and placed in the mouth. Both it and the cake were very nourishing, being rich in oil and starch. A small piece the size of a base-ball is said to contain food value equal to more than an entire loaf of our bread.

To the uninitiated, acorn bread is a tremendous disappointment. To me it tasts flat and chalky, but white persons who persist are said to learn to like it.

SALT FROM SALT GRASS

There being no natural deposit of mineral salt accessible to the Yokuts Indians of the San Joaquin Valley, the obtaining of this important article of diet was a serious problem. Along the east side of the San Joaquin Valley it is quite likely that a portion of the salt used was mineral salt obtained from mountain Indians who had in turn obtained it by trade from the inhabitants of the desert region east of the Sierra, where natural deposits of this mineral were common. We are assured by old Indians that salt obtained in this way was very expensive. Many beads of shell or steatite were demanded for a few handfuls of the crude salt offered.

A large portion of the salt used by the Yokuts tribes in the San Joaquin Valley is still obtained from salt grass. Although the method of obtaining this salt has been observed by white settlers since as long ago as 1850, it is remarkable that there have been available through libraries and newspaper files no detailed accounts of the method of harvesting and refining it.

All salt grass does not bear enough salt to make it useful as a source of that material. Most persons who have walked through some fields of salt grass in the early morning have found it covered with what appeared to be heavy dew, have later had the experience of finding their shoes covered with a heavy incrustation. This is the salt used by the Yokuts.

The salt is exuded from the leaves of the salt grass and adheres to them in small globules smaller than a mustard seed. In the early morning this excretion exists as a small drop of liquid. By noon of a warm day it has become solid and by mid-afternoon is dry and hard and can be removed from the leaves of the grass by threshing.

As the grass itself is not desirable, the problem exists of removing the salt without breaking up the brittle leaves and